

Written In Stone

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Belleville Faulk AME Zion Church Cemetery – Part I

Having visited the Belleville Faulk AME Zion Church when the deadly and devastating tornado hit Belleville in 2006, trying to survey damages to our local cemeteries, I was surprised to discover there were no records in our library archives for either the church or the cemetery. This past week, we received a query for a grave lookup, and since we needed a survey completed for our records, this was achieved with a simple trip out to Belleville on Monday afternoon of this week.

Researching the family names interred have taken me back to Green Street, Nichburg, Belleville, Evergreen, Monroeville and communities in between—not literally, but figuratively by studying the census and family records available. Originally, many of the earlier names found here include the George and Avarilla Kyser family who, most likely, were originally buried in the old Kyser Family Cemetery located in the woods off the original Belleville Road, and moved here at a later date.

Of the sixteen rows in this cemetery, there appear to be a total of 85 graves, with sixty-four identified, two illegible, leaving a total of nineteen unmarked slabs. Family names found here include the Crosby, Kelley, Kyser, Lindsey, Mallory, McCaskill, and Reed families, with many others included that married into those families. The first known interment would appear to be one from the Kyser family who died in 1911; however, if he was one of the ones moved from the family plot to the church cemetery, then, he wouldn't be the first interred here. Without family records showing when these graves were removed, we cannot be sure of the exact date. The last known interment appears to be that of the late Melvine Poindexter Burnett, daughter of Joe & Sallie Poindexter. She was born in 1941 and died in 2006; having been a past resident of NY, where she was employed in the radiology field for over 25 years before moving to FL.

Next week we'll feature some of the other family names you can find here, walking under the pines and reading the stones.